

REPORT

OF

A SPECIAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

Appointed by

**His Excellency Maj.-General Lefroy,
C. B.,**

Governor and Commander-in-Chief,

1st February, 1875,

To Consider and advise on Measures to be adopted

TO PREVENT THE EXTENSION OF SMALL POX.



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A SPECIAL MEDICAL COMMISSION

REPORT ON THE MEDICAL CONDITION OF THE

NAVY AND MARINE FORCES

IN 1934

TO PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THE

MLM

BY THE MEDICAL OFFICERS OF THE

1934

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HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR GENERAL LEFROY, C. B.,
GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, 1ST FEBRU-
ARY, 1875, TO CONSIDER AND ADVISE ON MEASURES
TO BE ADOPTED TO PREVENT THE EXTENSION OF
SMALL POX.

HAMILTON, BERMUDA,

11TH FEBRUARY, 1875.

In accordance with the instructions received from His Excellency the Governor, bearing date the 1st day of February, 1875, the Commission then appointed have carefully considered the papers placed at their disposal by His Excellency, also the present Sanitary condition of these Islands, and beg to submit the following recommendations for general circulation, the adoption of which they trust will be the means of averting any general outbreak of this highly contagious disease.

I.—Vaccination or Revaccination should be generally carried out without delay.

In order, if possible, to convince those who appear to doubt the efficacy of Vaccination in preventing Small-pox, the following extracts are inserted, which are taken from the work of Professor Aitken of the Army Medical School, Netley. "Natural Small-pox in unprotected persons is generally very fatal. The deaths average one in three. The fully formed 'Confluent' Small-pox is always very dangerous. About one in ten die of 'distinct' natural Small-pox; and one to three per cent. only of Small-pox after Vaccination." "To prove the influence of Vaccination in England, it is shown that out of every 1000 deaths in the half century from 1750 to 1800 there were 96 deaths from Small-pox; and out of every 1000 deaths in the half century from 1800 to 1850 there were only 35 deaths from Small-pox. To prove the influence of Small-pox on the Continent, it is shown that in various German States, sufficient evidence can be obtained to show, that out of every 1000 deaths before Vaccination was used, 66.5 were from Small-pox; but that out of every 1000 deaths after Vaccination came into use, the deaths from Small-pox were only 7.26."

II.—Every person, as far as practicable, on being attacked with Small-pox should be at once removed to an Hospital, established for the sole reception of such cases.

For this purpose a covered carriage should be provided and kept in the precincts of Hospital or other convenient position, and used only for the purpose assigned.

Children under six years of age, should, if possible, be accompanied by their Mother or some other female relative.

For those who from some cause cannot be removed to an Hospital, a room should be chosen in the residence of the sick person which can be isolated from the remainder of the house, and which possesses good means of ventilation. The same measures which are recommended below to be adopted in an Hospital will also apply here.

III.—Isolation of the sick from the healthy must be strictly carried out, not simply by refraining from personal communication, shaking of hands, and such things, but also from the interchange of letters, books, &c. All things of this description lent to the sick, should when done with be destroyed.

IV.—Every house in which Small-pox has occurred should be denoted by a yellow flag, and placed in quarantine. It should then be thoroughly fumigated and thrown open to the air for at least three days; after this, all such parts of its interior which are painted with the floors should be washed with soap and water, and the remainder, with its various outhouses, lime-washed. The premises should also be thoroughly cleaned and all rubbish removed. To allow of this being carried out, the inmates might when practicable, be placed in tents till fourteen days have elapsed since the removal of the infected person to Hospital. This measure should be adopted from the first when the inmates are over crowded, or the house in an insanitary condition.

V.—All persons who have been in personal communication with the sick, such as those who have occupied the same room or have frequently been in their company, should also be placed in quarantine for a period of fourteen days, but others who have been simply resident in the house, or have only occasionally met the sick person, especially if they have been recently vaccinated or have previously suffered from Small-pox, need not be so strictly isolated, but they should refrain from going to places of public resort. Their clothes should however be carefully disinfected.

VI.—All persons, especially those who have been in personal communication with any one suffering from Small-pox, should, on being attacked with a feeling of general indisposition,

fever, headache, pains over the body especially in the back, and vomiting, should at once report themselves to a medical man, without waiting for the more decided symptoms of the disease, that steps may be taken for their isolation, and the unnecessary risk of further infection thereby averted.

VII.—All clothing and bedding lately used by an infected person, should be disinfected as soon as possible, and under no circumstances should it be sent to a public laundry, or even removed from the house till so subjected.

VIII.—Rooms in houses where the disease has occurred should have the walls scraped, whitewashed when practicable, fumigated, and should not be entered for a time, but all windows left open. Either of the following methods of fumigation may be adopted :

With Nitrous Acid Gas.

Take Copper shavings (small copper wire or nails will answer the purpose)..... $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.,
Nitric Acid $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz.,
Water..... $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz., or
half a wine glassful.

Pour the acid and water upon the copper in a small jar.

With Sulphurous Acid Gas.

Burn two ounces of Sulphur in a pipkin.

All doors and windows and other openings in the room must be closed before commencing fumigation. The operator will leave the room immediately the process has commenced. At the expiration of from two to three hours, all doors and windows will be thrown open, and free ventilation established.

Clothing and bedding should be subjected to dry heat of 250° Fahrenheit for at least one hour and fumigated by one of the above methods, if the articles do not admit of being placed in boiling water, or otherwise disinfected. The following disinfectants will be found the best; Carbolic Acid, two table-spoonsful to a gallon of water, in which the articles are to be immersed 24 hours; or Condyl's or Burnett's fluid may be used according to the directions on the bottles. Articles of clothing of no great value should be destroyed by fire.

IX.—Medical Officers should be appointed to districts, who should ascertain, that the foregoing recommendations have been carried out as far as possible, also supervise its general sanitary condition, and daily visit such families, who have been exposed to infection, for a period of fourteen days from the time of the removal of the sick person to Hospital.

X.—All persons employed about the sick should be protected by Vaccination or by having previously suffered from Small-pox.

XI.—Nurses should be strong, healthy women. Since much of the well-being of the sick depends on the manner in which they discharge the duties entrusted to them, they should be made fully aware of their responsibilities. Not only will the most scrupulous cleanliness be necessary in their own persons, but also in their patients, so far as this can be maintained without causing the latter annoyance or distress. In washing themselves and their patients a little of Condyl's or Burnett's fluid should be used in the water, or Carbolic acid soap. They must maintain perfect ventilation of the sick chamber, and prevent any one, except those having authority to do so, from entering. They must be exact in carrying out the instructions of the Medical Attendant; in giving nourishment and medicines; watchful over their patients, noting any change which may occur, reporting all such circumstances to the Medical Attendant at his next visit. They must see that all clothing removed from the sick, dirty sheets, &c., be taken from the room, and at once disinfected; that all articles of furniture, carpets, bedding, as well as clothing, &c., not absolutely necessary for the time being, be removed from the room. They should also place underneath the bed, and in other convenient parts of the room, basins or dishes containing dilute Carbolic Acid, Condyl's or Burnett's Fluid, or Chloride of Lime, replenishing these from time to time.

XII.—The Hospital should be entirely under the charge of the Medical Attendant, and no one should be allowed to enter or leave it without a written pass from him. He should visit the sick at least twice daily.

XIII.—In the early stage of the disease, a diet, such as the following, should be allowed: Milk, 2 pints; Bread, 8 oz.; Arrowroot, 2 oz.; Sugar, 1 oz.; with sometimes when necessary 1 pint of Beef Tea. Barley Water, Rice Water, or Lemonade should also be given.

Later in the disease a more nourishing diet will be required, but its nature and amount must be left to the Medical Attendant. A supply of essence of Beef, Liebig's Extract of Beef, with Wine and Brandy, should also be kept ready for use.

XIV.—Numerous applications have been recommended for the purpose of allaying irritation and preventing disfigurement; few have however been found effectual. The following are considered to be most likely to afford relief: Carbolic Acid and Olive Oil, in the proportion of a teaspoonful of Acid to a pint of Oil; or Olive Oil by itself; or Camphorated Oil. Other remedies to be left to the Medical Attendant.

XV.—In case of the death of a patient the body should be removed to an isolated building or tent in the precincts of the Hospital, to be used only for this purpose; and buried without any unnecessary delay. The same precautions should be taken

as regards the bearers, as in those in attendance on the sick.

XVI.—It is further recommended for general adoption; that ventilation of houses be thoroughly carried out; that cleanliness of the person, houses, and their surroundings, &c., be carefully attended to; that Chloride of Lime, Lime, Carbolic Acid, or other disinfectants be freely used in cess-pits, drains, sinks, &c., for which purpose one or other of them should be distributed gratuitously to the poor when considered necessary by the Medical Officer of the district; that all persons should live generously, but studiously avoid excess in the use of stimulants; and that they dismiss unnecessary apprehension, which predisposes to disease.

XVII.—Should the disease spread, it is recommended that the Hospitals on the Quarantine Islands be opened for the reception of the sick, and that boats for the conveyance of the affected be set apart. The foregoing recommendations should still be carried out as far as practicable.

XVIII.—Since it is not possible to enforce the adoption of Quarantine as herein recommended, it must be left to the good feeling of those who have been exposed to infection that they isolate themselves for a period of fourteen days, although doing so may be attended with inconvenience to themselves. Otherwise, from a want of using some self-denial, they may be the means of carrying infection of a very dangerous and fatal disease to others.

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Hamilton, Bermuda, 11th February, 1875.



